

From: Jerry Seeger
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: thoughts on the antitrust settlement

I am rather perplexed and amazed by the proposed settlement of the antitrust violations of Microsoft. Perplexed because the settlement is so weak that it is not a punishment at all and amazed that anyone thinks it would change Microsoft's behavior after the brazen way the company rolled over the last consent decree.

Microsoft broke the law. Microsoft is continuing with the exact same illegal behavior in Windows XP by bundling CD-burning software, instant messaging, and a host of other features. As an example, the CD-Burning features in Windows XP are vastly inferior to other commercial (non-free) products, but despite the higher quality the independent vendors cannot compete with free. Yet, if the features listed above are intrinsic features of an operating system which should be available at no charge, why do you have to pay an extra \$200 to connect securely to Microsoft's own servers? Which one of those sounds more like a necessary operating system feature that should not cost extra? The extra cost for a secure connection to a Microsoft server is an example of what happens when Microsoft has no competition in a market.

This so-called settlement merely legitimizes Microsoft's continued predatory behavior. More competitors will vanish each year, until there is only one software company. Any software maker who makes a useful product for the windows platform will eventually be replaced by second-rate, but free, software from Microsoft.

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